myndsquilver

Ex luna, scientia

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During an intense period of personal reflection and eremetic living, an old friend suggested to me that I revisit my time in the Order by writing my 'memoirs' specifically from an esoteric perspective. The purpose of this would be to serve as an insight into one practical journey along the Seven Fold Way, for those trusted few just embarking upon their own journeyings. It was a useful exercise, if only for myself, to illustrate how there is in reality no division between any of the alchemical lives and Ways I have lived, regardless of their outer form, and regardless of what the world may think of those forms. If one believes oneself to be the sum of all life's experiences, then there is a debt of gratitude to be acknowledged to those Ways which were the most significant and positively transformative. This MS is one such debt of gratitude.

I

My earliest memories are of the Simonside and Cheviot Hills in Northumberland. My father, a keen walker, would often take me with him on his hikes up to the peaks, through long swathes of pine forests, straddling steep rivers to reach vast rocky moorland - the type you only experience in the North of the British Isles. And once the summit reached, the sky always seemed in retrospect to be dark grey, and filled with boiling, rushing clouds promising storm. Those intoxicating manifestations of Nature possessed my soul from the beginning, and guided me to where I am now. Even from the earliest age, I sensed a melancholy, a strange yearning in such places.

And so I was fortunate to have been brought up in some of the most lovely and dramatic English countryside. An entirely different side to the desolate Northumbrian moors and peaks was experienced when, during my teens, my family moved to a classic English village in the Herefordshire countryside. There I discovered the special magic of English woodlands, wildflower meadows, magpies, small fields and hedgerows; country estates, Summer Houses, landscaped gardens with vast sweeping cedars. All this furthered a love for Nature which was *magickal* - although in my early years I did not understand it as such. Somehow I just knew my soul was nourished by such environments, and gradually I came to feel there were secrets - or "answers" - contained somehow within the dimensions of these landscapes. Interestingly, I made a connection that the landscaped country estates emanated the same energy as the moorlands I so loved; that they represented, for me, the same specific numinous "thing".

This land of verdant hedgerows led me to develope an interest in faerie folklore, dreaming that I might make contact with these otherworldly societies and perhaps even escape from mundane reality into a more 'real' dimension which I sensed did exist. Teachers and family always labelled me a dreamer as a child. For myself, I felt an outsider amongst my family and my peers - although I never had trouble making friends at school. But school and any social gathering was emotionally traumatic: I was burdened with an intense shyness, inherited it seems (if such things are) from a reclusive Great Aunt who happened to be a spiritualist/psychic medium. I never really conquered this shyness, but painfully learned to live with it and tried hard to not let it dictate the experiences of my life. In some ways, it allowed a balance and was/is part of my "power": this shyness, this self-consciousness has always, for the most part I believe, kept my ego in check.

The numinous power of music also touched me from a very early age. My grandmother was a talented pianist and I would always be drawn to listen to her playing her favourite composer Chopin, as well as Schubert and Schumann. I remember her laughing with frustration as she grappled with the descending motif of Schubert's Impromptu Op. 90 No. 4. But it was always in the melancholy or stormy musical moments when I made the connection between music and Nature; that again, both somehow emanated from the same 'thing'.

Once at the secondary Boys School I reluctantly attended (a High School with pretensions to a be a Grammar/minor Public School), a friend introduced me to the music of Led Zeppelin. I was never greatly keen on the music itself (except 'The Battle of Evermore', and some tracks from 'Houses of the Holy'), but I found myself becoming fascinated by Jimmy Page's interest in magick. This of course led me, as it did with so many, to discovering Aleister Crowley. It was Crowley's life which interested me - I found his writings on magick boring and disappointing, the few I could be bothered to read. It was the rather forbidding aura around the man himself which proved very attractive; the way he seemed to defiantly shock society, and to revel in extreme, adventurous (in the classic sense of the English Eccentric) and apparently notorious experiences. I was particularly fascinated by his 'Paris Working' involving Pan. And so a new portal in my other, more real, world began to open.

II

A disposition towards finding beauty in melancholia, and a growing sense of teenage rebellion/anger at the "mundane" world created a desire to experience Black Magick: to become a Black Magickian - to become a Satanist. I was never interested in achieving personal power - power over others, wealth, fame, the usual trappings

associated with Black Magick. Rather, I wanted to explore uncharted, forbidden landscapes - to visit and dwell in other dimensions, and to communicate with and learn from hitherto unknown beings; to return Home, as I understood it. This coincided with an unhappy move, whilst still at school, to a city - Manchester; but one which also provided some benefits. Of course pre-internet, the Occult world was far more forbidding and far more exciting a prospect to be practically involved with. One had to actually go out and make contacts and track people down - write letters of introduction and, most importantly, arrange to physically meet contacts (so much harder back then for armchair egotists to flourish).

I dropped out of school whilst studying for A levels and spent my days instead scouring city bookshops for clues. Of course, it was a Satanic Temple I was looking for, and I knew of rumours of the local Orthodox Temple of the Prince,but intuitively I felt uninspired to investigate. Instead, whilst in some obscure Occult/New Age shop, I spotted a notice advertising the services of a "genuine" High Priest of Alexandrian witchcraft. It was Wicca's emphasis on the powers of Nature which interested me, and like so many people, I wanted to part of something similar to the community featured in the 1973 version of The Wicker Man.

I phoned the number, and arranged to meet the gentleman in question. He was interesting and charismatic, with a certain edge to him - very unlike the New Agey types I had met at local 'Psychic Fairs'. He was a gypsy, who had at that time settled in the (then) depressing town of Wigan. He offered to teach and guide me through the initiatory grades of Alexandrian Witchcraft. And so began an interesting two years of studying and practising the mish-mash of qabala, Golden Dawn, Thelema, and Paganism which was the Alexandrian system. I practised twice a day - banishing pentagram rituals, rather tedious prayers which incorporated parts of the Old Testament, and much meditation and visualization.

My teacher was a decent person with genuine psychical abilities which he would occasionally demonstrate - for example, once in a crowded shopping centre waiting to meet him, I suddenly felt a pulse of energy which made me spin round on the spot to face him as he stood some 300 or so yards away, amongst the thronging shoppers. But, I grew impatient with the increasingly labourious qabalistic workings. Once the glamour of being an initiated 'Witch' wore off (and sadly my secret hope of being initiated by a vampish lady was not to be - my first degree ritual was rather lacking in drama and magick), I felt no spark in the rituals, and increasingly realised that the confusing methods of the qabala bore no resemblance to the magick of Nature. It was never Dark enough. And by Dark I do not mean 'perverse' or quintessentially

'evil' deeds; rather, for me there was a haunting sense of some shadow side to everyday existence - some realm in which existed beings which were what They were: perhaps 'evil' to outsiders due to appearance, but to me in essence, Kin. Gradually I began to read more about the LHP in general, and tried to discuss this with my teacher. He became increasingly unnerved by this interest and often warned me against it - which only strengthened my desires.

Around this time, 'Chaos Magic' was making itself known and I began to read the literature of the Illuminates of Thanteros, and felt a calling in that direction. Chaos magic projected a defiant, anarchic

individualistic approach which appealed to me greatly. And so, inevitably, my time as an Alexandrian Witch came to its end. It was at this time also that I decided to take the name 'Christos Beest' - a ridiculous, contemptuous gesture to Occult pomposity: a deliberate joke. During that period I had learned and practised hard quite a number of basic occult principles and exercises which would all help in taking the next esoteric steps. I had also produced a large body of paintings inspired by my experiences, and a set of black and white line drawings depicting a transformation of a woman amidst a landscape of leafy lanes and old large houses. This woman was Lilith, who had at that time become my Goddess. My teacher kept all these works stored away amongst various occult paraphanelia. Perhaps they will turn up in the public arena one day, assuming they were not destroyed.

I decided to move close to the creator of Chaos Magic in order to join his IOT Temple. So I was interviewed and accepted as a Foundation Art student at Bath College, and promptly moved there. Just before I left Manchester, I ordered and received an issue of Stephen Sennitt's Nox magazine, and in this issue was an article called 'A Gift For The Prince - A Guide to Human Sacrifice' by the Order of Nine Angles. Although at that time obsessed with Chaos Magic, that article hit me with a force like the storm clouds over the Northumbrian hills, and there was felt a frisson of fate ... But it would be a year before I contacted either the IOT or ONA.

III

My time in the beautiful city of Bath was an hallucinatory gathering of energies in preparation for my sinister journey proper. Typically, I spent very little time at the college and when I did, as someone described, I filled it with "black crackling hate". I entered into a stormy relationship with a fellow student whose creative energies often focussed on the

goddess Hel and her own menstrual cycle, and together we embarked on strange, primitive free-form magickal experiences which rather quickly produced in both of us unusual altered states of consciousness. We wandered round the city drunk on the energies, and seemingly sealed in our own Dark world, alienating most people we met. She introduced me to the book 'The Wise Wound' and I began to use her menstrual blood in my paintings, becoming rather obsessed with it.

We spent most of our time painting and writing in the room she rented above a nursery where they would hang dolls up by their hair on a washing line. According to her live-in landlady and transvestite husband, her arrival coincided with a resurfacing of paranormal activity - sightings of 'ghosts', most notably a faceless woman (who I would see occasionally), and a little boy who had drowned in a bath in the nursery a few years previously. I became rather obsessed then with The Goetia, and began invokations through painting - painting the various demonic entities after calling them forth. Whenever I painted these beings, storms would occur.

Our joint end of term exhibition included two of my very large oil on canvas paintings: one depicted a Madonna with blood-red hair cradling AntiChrist as child amidst Apocalyptic ruins, and inscribed along the top in gold lettering, an extract from the Black Mass (in Latin); the other depicted a nun-like figure in white standing by an iron maiden, with the two of us as children holding implements of torture. This latter image (minus the children) was later recalled as 'Azoth' in my Sinister Tarot.

Following the exhibition, an opportunity came up for me to live in Newport in South Wales, rather close to the city of Bristol which was my original target regarding Chaos Magic. On my way down there after visiting friends in Manchester, the train passed through Church Stretton in the county of Shropshire; a name I recognised from a PO box address for the ONA given in Nox. As the train passed, I found myself electrified by the sight of what I would come to know as the Long Mynd, against a background of a now familiar augurous storm-wracked sky ...

IV

Arriving in Newport, I moved into a grotty flat without heating above a disused Indian Takeaway, in a wonderfully post-Apocalyptic area called Pyll. I shared the flat with a few art students. Armed with a copy of Peter Carroll's ‘Liber Null’, I quickly converted my bedroom into a Temple and began to try out a few of the planetary rituals, settling on the Rites of Mars. One magickal incident is worth recalling: a traveller girl lived above my room and she had a keen interest in the occult and would often read the runes. On one occasion I was performing a Rite of Mars and she was

simultaneously conducting a ritualised working with the runes. For perhaps a couple of seconds I was suddenly looking out through her eyes, in her body, in her room - and then back into my own body. We both rushed out of our rooms and met on the stairs, and it transpired she had had the same experience at that moment looking out through my eyes.

I made contact with Peter Carroll who was then, and remained during my time with the IOT, a really nice chap, who clearly enjoyed playing the role of 'Mage'. I attended his Temple meetings in a basement in a Bohemian area of Bristol, and various Occult personalities of the day would come and go as guests. There was sometimes, to my perception anyway, a rather 'old guard' attitude amongst the more seasoned and well-known Occultists; a looking down on the new members somewhat. I remember finding this and the rather self-satisfied air of the 'elder' personalities quite irritating. But other members were interesting - including a lady who had worked for the celebrated madame Cynthia Payne, and who would attend meetings in body-hugging red leather.

Ceremonies were always concluded with laughter as banishing. There was a rather self- conscious approach to creating rituals, where humour often played a main role and anything genuinely numinous or sacred would be defused by this approach (since "nothing was true"). I must admit to being disappointed at finding the dark, dangerous aura so redolent in the literature quite lacking. The meetings were more like those of a polite club for members who wished to play the role of wizard. But still, they were often a fun way of passing a Thursday evening.

In the meantime, I became fascinated with Giles de Rais after reading Huysman's La Bas. Opposite our flat was a disused supermarket and exploring it one day I found a pile of Sunday supplement magazines featuring the actor Roger Moore on the cover. To celebrate the anniversary of Giles de Rais' execution (his 'DeathDay'), I cut out the face of Roger Moore and pasted all the copies over the front of the supermarket. They flittered in the night breeze as I blasted the sounds of musical boxes from two large amps positioned in the window and announced the DeathDay to the mostly deserted, litter-strewn street. I concluded the evening by sleeping in a wardrobe placed on the floor like a coffin.

Not surprisingly, my rituals for the IOT became increasingly ridiculous. My last ritual in particular, the Removal of the Brain, rather gave away my utter lack of respect for the system of Chaos Magic. The ritual is simply too absurd to describe here.

Chaos Magic was fun, but I longed to feel a sense of the Sacred in magick. A couple of months after arriving in Newport, as Winter drew on, I sent off a letter of introduction to the Order of Nine Angles at their PO Box Church Stretton address.

V

During my time as a witch and before, I had searched for something Dark, but my investigations led me to conclude that the only available forms of Satanism were rather urban in their ethos, with little or no emphasis on the beauty of Nature. The Temple of Set and the Church of Satan held no interest for me whatsoever. To me they were contrived gothic circuses, and being relatively new and American (given my limited experience of that country and culture) they held for me nothing of the arcane darkness I was searching for. I dreamed then of my ideal: some sort of hybrid between Witchcraft and Satanism, based in England and in which women played a dominant role. Something with an ancient pedigree, and whose members were gentlemen and ladies.

I received a prompt response from the ONA, written with a ribbon typewriter, and suggesting a meeting at Shrewsbury railway station, in Shropshire. The date for the meeting was Tuesday, 5th December 1989. In those days, most people had not heard of the Order, and its presence when encountered was rather shadowy, obscure and surrounded by dark rumours of sacrifice. My first impressions of my contact were of someone indeed academic, cultured, highly intelligent and educated, but these combinations, unusually, were accompanied by an almost feral quality in the way he calmly moved, and in the way he regarded me and listened as I spoke. When he spoke, there was a modest, measured, mannered tone and he appeared as if he had infinite patience. There was nothing sensationalist or egotistic in the way he held himself or in what he had to say, and this was so refreshing after my experiences with the personalities of the IOT. There was in his aura, in his eyes, a sense of real Pagan depth akin to the feelings I experienced on remote hill sides and peaks. I instantly felt that I was no longer playing some occult game but was instead on the threshold of something very real.

I mentioned a little about my method of developing 'kameas' based on a numerical spiral which I had constructed, and my contact replied that he thought I was just the person they had been looking for. And so on my return to the flat, the MS known as 'The Black Book of Satan' was waiting for me in the post. I knew I had found what I was searching for all those years. Over the next few months I undertook the pathway and sphere workings as outlined in Naos, and began work on the Sinister Tarot around the Winter Solstice of 1989. The first card, completed very quickly, was

Mistress of Earth. To discover the true meaning of Baphomet - She who washes in the blood of her enemies - was a complete revelation and yet one which felt so right according to my intuitions over the years. I was enthralled to learn of the major role women played within the Order. Here was something so different to the macho posturings of most occult organisations, including those which claimed to be Satanic. And it was clear from the history of the Order that its ethos pre-dated Satanism itself ...

Over the subsequent months I continued creating the major arcana of the Tarot and undertook editorship of Fenrir. My personal life became ever more chaotic and disrupted and resulted in increasing confrontations with people - mostly non-occultists. I put this down to my Sinister hermetic workings and my defiant insistence on being publically recognised as a Satanist (and on being called Christos Beest). Out of work most of that time - well, I was unemployable - I undertook what was then the government created scheme called the Enterprise Allowance in order to fund the publishing of Fenrir and other Order material: the first and probably only person to have pursued Satanism under such a scheme.

Regular meetings with my contact revealed more of the fascinating teachings of the Tradition - including esoteric chant techniques (on the slopes of Haddon Hill, where during one session the 'Atazoth' was sung and snow began to silently fall) and the 'alternative' Arthurian legends, which brought me to the house known as 'Brynorgan', then a ruin close to Offa's Dyke. During one such meeting, at the wooden shelter below the war memorial at the foot of the Burway, my contact arrived with a combination lock suitcase, and I was left alone for an hour to read a bound MS. This MS was the now rather infamous 'Diablerie'. The MS was retrieved at the end of the reading and locked and taken away.

On May 24th 1990 I successfully undertook the challenge of the External Adept rite on Twmbarlwm hill fort in Gwent, and following that, for the next few years I took on the responsibility of being the Order's 'outer representative', ie. editing Fenrir, answering enquiries, and, despite my inexperience - or because of it, as a test of myself and of those met - meeting with prospective adherents. I woke up each morning - and for many years after that - with an absolute sense of Destiny: a belief that I was Falcifer, a belief which was strengthened on being informed by my contact that I had been chosen as heir to the Tradition.

On the Autumn Equinox of that year, I was instructed to undertake a physical challenge - walking 40 miles in 32 hours following a route covering a particularly significant area of South Shropshire. This route included the Long Mynd, the

Stiperstones, Black Rhadley Hill and Corndon Hill. This was the first time I had visited this area, and the route served as an introduction to certain sinister forces, and sinister history. Walking on the glorious Long Mynd was intoxicating and I felt such a sense of empathy with that landscape. I spent the night on the Stiperstones, battered by winds, but I very clearly heard a group of women singing - although the voices were so perfect they did not sound quite human to me. The area around Black Rhadley made the most striking impression; once one had left the road, a genuine sinister energy, close to a particular house, was present and all enveloping. Later I published some details of this journey under the title of 'The Black Pilgrimage'.

VI

In many ways I felt my time with the IOT had come to an end, but mainly for sociable reasons, I continued for a little while longer. I must admit to becoming increasingly contemptuous of Chaos Magic and this did not go unnoticed. But, I continued to contribute rituals which were welcomed, and so I decided to take the opportunity to gradually introduce the Septenary elements of the ONA and observe the results.

One of the rituals in that respect was the “Self- Immolation Rite”. This was originally a Septenary answer to Peter Carroll's 'Chthonos Working' and I really conceived it as an absurdist work, replete with my black-ish humour. It was first performed as a ritualised guided meditation at a meeting of the Bristol Temple, attended also by Ian Read and a few others from the London scene. I read/declaimed the original script, and in between played a record of Mozart's Mass in C minor backwards. Another contribution was a play called 'Divulls' which contained various references to the Dark Gods mythos and was performed outside by a large gathering of IOT Temples in a wood near the Cheddar Gorge (the MS has long since disappeared).

One magickal occurrence stands out. The IOT celebrated Baphomet in the Eliphas Levi tradition, and there was little interest in my insistence on Baphomet being in fact a Dark Goddess. Their Baphomet idol was a teddy bear head replete with an extra few glass eyes, bedecked with horns and mounted on our Temple wall. That night, Mr Carroll wanted to explore magickal chant. I suggested we experiment with the sinister chants I had been learning - one of which was an invokation of Atazoth. Peter on the other hand wanted to perform a set of vibrations connected instead with his developing Ouranian language (the IOT's version of Enochian).

He put it to the vote as to who wished to join who in the performances of the two chants. Everyone of course elected to chant with Peter, so I stood in the shadows

waiting for them to finish their vibrating. Once finished they stood and listened to my performance of the Atazoth chant. As the chant came to its conclusion, the 'Baphomet' image was flung from the wall to the floor, and rapidly the Temple began to fill with a thick atmosphere that for me felt like 'love'. For the rest it obviously didn't, and Peter conducted a very hasty banishing ritual (to no external effect, of course), and the meeting was concluded. Afterwards, in a rather solemn post-ritual drink, it was declared that the chant and any of its kind should never be performed again as "we don't know what we're dealing with". Strange attitude I thought, for Chaos Magickians. That night I asked to sleep in the Temple, and I did so, enveloped in the potent energies.

During this time, I was instructed by my contact in the martial art of Physis. These sessions took place at various locations on the Long Mynd, such as Bodbury Ring, but also on The Wrekin, one severe Winter (the house halfway up the track leading to the summit was interesting re. the Tradition ...). The training included using an air pistol to replicate disabling an armed attacker.

My membership of the ONA caused tensions in my relationship with the IOT, as well as my involvement in a little unit I set up with a local 'anarchist' which made and detonated bombs (on empty building sites) and aimed to set off fires on commercial premises (no fatalities). Towards the end of my time in the IOT, Peter Carroll, perhaps unwisely, appointed me as his 'Insurbordinate'. I'm not exactly sure what I did beyond my usual modes of behaviour, but the Temple was closed down about a month later. I left Bristol shortly thereafter.

During these two or so years, I inherited three very different and distinct crystals which were used in solo and ceremonial nine angles rites. The first was employed during my first solo NA rite on a hill called 'Nils' and lies buried on the Long Mynd close to Ashes Hollow; the second was used in ceremonial work during my time in York and is buried at the outdoor Temple there; and the third - a rather large piece of pure quartz - is secreted away close to a village on the North West Scottish mainland, within sight of an un-named hill.

VII

In the aftermath of an emotional tryst which went very wrong, I spent time catching up with some friends in the Manchester area. My gradual disdain for the 'Occult personality' and the emotional trauma of the aforementioned "affair" left me feeling rather like starting afresh. I realised how my own appearance - long black/red hair, piercings, sometimes elaborate make-up of my own devising - militated against the

shape-shifting tradition I was now fully part of. Gradually I internalised the image, and ceased insisting on being called CB and reverted, in the mundane world, to my mundane name. I seemed then to become far more approachable to people, which in turn enabled me to develope improved skills of empathy with 'ordinary', non-occulitic folk.

I worked in a few jobs, notably night shift at a postal sorting office where one of my fellow workers was obsessed with the history of German National-Socialism. These proved interesting conversations since some months previously my contact had brought up the subject at a meeting, testing my reactions, and briefly outlined the esoteric significance of that form, in sinister (Aeonic) terms - ie. a disruptive form to create the necessary chaos from which a new aeonic society might arise, one which would exist along 'sinister' lines, regardless of 'race' and the trappings of the outer form used to bring it about.

Around this time, a NS version of an issue of Exeat (which I occasionally edited) was published by Thormynd Press, causing quite a stir in the occult world. This co-incided with a letter sent to me to contact a military NS group, and undertake training with them. I was intrigued by this new world, but dawdled too long over my decision (torn as I was between revulsion and intrigue), and soon the group itself was closed due to infiltrators.

I decided then to attempt to join the Army. Initially, I chose the French Foreign Legion - did some research and concluded that it was not for me. I was interviewed by the regular Army who assumed I would be officer material (due to my 'educated' demeanor)- but I lacked the academic qualifications. So it was whittled down to theTerritorial Army (my heart wasn't really in this particular role). For three months I went along for the initial training, went off to the selection weekend - which I thought I did rather well at - but my shape-shifting abilities did not really help me: most were suspicious of my reasons for being there, and when it came to it, they refused to sign my papers of admission.

So, I returned back to my flat and went out and sold my extensive record collection to fund a trip for a few weeks to Pluscarden Abbey in North Scotland. The Abbey was one of the few places left to conduct all services in Latin, and I spent a valuable time there listening to and learning about the principles of chant.

Initially I felt rather clever hiding my real sinister intent, but was actually surprised to discover my secret contempt for their Nazarene religion giving way to an appreciation of the way of life there, and of the pure intent and spirituality emanating from the

ethereal monks. This experience gave me an even deeper insight into the nature of chant as acausal entity, describing and then becoming the very energies themselves - sometimes Nazarene in nature, but also sometimes not, regardless of the intent. I also recall going for long walks in the vast pine forest above the monastery and sensing in some areas there a decidedly sinister presence.

On my return, and two years or so after the first image, I completed the major arcana of the Sinister Tarot, the final card being 'Desire'.

VIII

My move to the city of York coincided with my first forays into National- Socialism, within the context of an Insight Role. Initially I joined the British Movement and met up occasionally with a leading member of that group, a devout vegan and skinhead activist. I enjoyed the thrill of being accepted into this entirely new world, and I became fascinated by the literature I read - particularly of course the writings of DW Myatt and such works as 'Campaign In Russia' by Leon Degrelle. It felt good to be part of a group of outlaws, powered by a vision of revolution.

In reality I had no political views - and normally if pressed I might have quoted Monty Python's 'Holy Grail', ie. something about a supporting a 'society of autonomous individuals'. Typically for one of a middle-class cosseted background, I flirted with' anarchism' and the far Left during my teens, but I had had no experience of the harshness of the world in order to forge a genuine political world- view. The heretical aura around NS was exciting; like the genuine Satanism of the time, it was forbidding, dangerous, and was certainly a world I would not normally have entered - which of course was the point.

I also met a lady at this time who I was to spend the next 14 years of my life with. She shared my esoteric aims and even (cautiously) appreciated the reasons for my journeyings into NS, and supported me in this. In early 1994 I began to plan for my Internal Adept rite, to be undertaken the following year. I decided on an area in the Connemara region of West Ireland. It was something at the time which I felt I should be aiming for, but there was a curious emptiness regarding preparations. I worked in various jobs to finance the ritual - including three months in a Dickensian chocolate factory, during which stint, on my last shift, I took my first and last acid trip.

When the time came, I flew to Galway and halfway through the flight I realised I would not be undertaking the rite. I arrived in Galway, despondent, burdened by my rucksack, and found a B&B in which to hide for the night. I was simply not ready for

that rite - emotionally, physically, intellectually, psychically - and I knew if I attempted it I would fail. I flew back the next day, feeling rather sheepish.

I needed to toughen myself up, and thus I decided to undertake an insight role. Reichsfolk was created around this time in order to provide the necessary spiritual foundation, and I agreed, not entirely happily, to take charge of this rather odd organisation. Again, this implied publishing material, meeting prospective members, organising and attending training sessions (physis) on the Long Mynd and elsewhere. The assumption of this role was mostly quite easy since it was so dynamic and involved and appealed to my perverse, heretical sense at the time, but there were predictable moments in between when I found myself struggling with the racialist ideology - but also my ever present sense of what lay beyond matricies and the yearning to live that essence ...

Regarding the racist aspect, I tended to think, like a few others, that NS was concerned with a love of one's own race and culture and not a hatred of other races. I regarded it all as a type of militant paganism - this is perhaps what made the role possible for me.

I vividly recall at this time staggering back from a New Year's eve party in York with my partner. I had just had, typically for this time, some political altercation with some 'lefty' at the party, and my blood was suitably boiled. It took a great deal to incline me to violence, but that night, partly thanks to the alcohol, I was ready for a physical confrontation. Four young Asian men began walking towards us, and I prepared myself for a brawl. They came up to us and immediately shook my hand, wishing us both a Happy New Year and telling us to care for and look after each other. In that moment, their warmth and humanity completely dissolved all my anger. A precious insight - or rather, a simple reminder of what I already knew - but one which I buried the following day for the sake of my role.

Regarding The Holocaust: the revisionist material was quite a revelation to me, and I devoured it avidly. I was of a generation and culture who no longer felt some personal tie to the events of World War II, and it seemed to me quite reasonable to subject the details of Holocaust to critical scrutiny as one would do anything else, if one sought to not simply parrot what one was told was a truth. I enjoyed the frisson of arguing with anyone over the veracity of these accepted truths - but, given my immersion in that role, I was uninterested in studying the arguments against revisionism. Even then however, I could not come to any clear conclusions as to what I actually believed in this regard. As a follower of the Sinister Path, it was enough for me to question - to question anything and everything.

Three meetings from that period of Insight Roling stand out for me. One was an informal gathering in a room in a Leeds pub of a few skinheads and dreadlocked anarchists to discuss tactics for their mutual aim: system overthrow. The meeting was uneasy and didn't amount to much - a few promises to do a few things which as far as I'm aware were never done. It was interesting that the anarchists were rather deferential to the skinheads. Another was a Reichsfolk gathering in a room close to York railway station attended by DWM and an elderly chap who was imprisoned during the war for being a National-Socialist.

The third was a meeting with individuals from some Leeds football firms. I never made any effort to alter my appearance as I felt it was important to be myself as far as possible: a bespectacled, scruffy, middle-class student type, and so rather incongruous under the circumstances. I entered the pub to informally talk with this group about the 'spirituality' of NS. They were a fearsome bunch to be sure. Although they were quite clearly perplexed by what I had to say and also quite clearly concerned about why I was really there, they were at the same time rather trusting - a trait quite common in that movement, and perhaps one its problems.

I avoided drinking to keep a clear head, although I really could have done with a few whiskies at that point. I used to play the Shakuhatchi - a thick and hard bamboo flute - which I carried around with me in my rucksack, and which doubled as a weapon. As tensions seemed to rise, one of the chaps asked me what the flute was. My nervous energy began to finally work for me then, so I explained a bit about the flute and stood up in the middle of the pub and played a few bars of a traditional tune to some applause. Things were better after that, and I then enjoyed a few pints - although the subject of NS spirituality was dropped, but looking back, that wasn't really the point of the experience.

On returning after this to the house I shared with my partner, I listened to the late piano works of Brahms and I remember being moved to tears by the almost hopeless yearning it conveyed to me for beauty, and a better and more noble world. I remember distinctly experiencing, on such a deep emotional level, the disparity between Brahms' music and the ugly world of that pub environment of my chosen role.

IX

My activities with the ONA continued as before - now augmented by 'natural' Nine Angles rites with my partner whom I initiated into the Sinister Tradition on Caer Caradoc near Knighton. I also had two interesting interviews: one with Gavin

Baddeley for his book Lucifer Rising (and the interview was 1993 not '94 as stated in the book), and the other with the Revd Ken Logan. This took place at Pole Cottage on the Long Mynd and the atmosphere was suitably sinister as a fog enveloped us during the interview. The same car would pass our spot at regular intervals; typically, I thought very little of it - but as he later recalled in his book, it was the local police. I actually rather liked him, and there seemed to be points where we agreed, in broadly spiritual terms. It was a shame he chose to lie about ONA publications in the published interview (implying child abuse/sacrifice, as I recall).

It was also in York where I began to compose, exclusively at that point for the piano, since a close friend of mine back then was a professional pianist. My first attempts ('The Realms' and the piano suite 'Fates') were premiered at a piano recital at the College of Ripon and York around 1995.

On arriving in York, I located and joined a Wiccan coven, partly for sociable reasons and partly to continue experimenting with spreading energies via other occult forms. This group was far more receptive to the Sinister, and was certainly Dionysian - in fact, the 'cakes and ale' section of the evening was the main reason people attended. Things were promising for a few months, as these things can be, and the coven was trained in and successfully undertook a performance of the Ceremony of Recalling (without Opfer ending). Things fell apart quickly once the High Priest in particular began to feel his authority undermined and that the Sinister was taking over. There was a drunken showdown one night, and I resigned from the group.

So my partner and I decided to form our own Temple which would be a combination of the Sinister and traditional Witchcraft. Amongst its members was a Catholic Priest who was a once Chaplain to the armed forces, and the three of us in particular became quite adept at Sinister chant (we recorded a few chants onto tape, which have since found their way onto the internet). One of the principles of the group was that we would work outside throughout the year in all weathers, 'sky-clad'.

We visited a few areas around North Yorkshire and eventually settled on an unassuming, obscure strip of dense woodland bordering a field on the edge of the village of Murton.

This proved a very satisfying experience, and combined with my ongoing Insight Role, as well as various physical tasks relating to the Order, I felt myself moving towards the stage of Internal Adept. Again, I planned this a year before the rite was to occur, and undertook the usual reconnaissance trips. This time, after having visited

the Western Isles some years previously, I settled on Scotland. I visited the area around Loch Morar and knew I had found the perfect location.

A few months before I was due to leave for my Internal Adept rite, there was a reunion with the original Yorkshire coven, and the two groups fused together to produce a third which in the end did away completely with the ceremonies and became simply orgiastic. This experience only served to strengthen my relationship with my partner, but it did take its toll on the marriage of the High Priest, and with that, the group fell to pieces.

Our Temple continued, and was all set to continue during my time away. I travelled to Scotland to undertake the Internal Adept rite on March 21st 1997. The experience is documented in the Order MS 'Dyssolving'.

X

As expected, I did not really want to leave the life I was beginning to live in Scotland. I also discovered that the ritual plants many seeds, and they all take their own time to germinate - sometimes years. I expected to return fully transformed, as an almost 'Merlin' type figure - to myself and to others - but all I found was the mundane world carrying on regardless, and an increased difficulty on my part to fit in with it.

I remember walking to Arisaig when the rite had finished and sitting outside the lovely hotel there, feeling rather pleased with myself. An American tourist came up to me and asked about some local feature, and unbidden I found myself telling him how I had just spent three months living in a tent in the distant mountains. He seemed rather unimpressed - unimpressed by what must have appeared a rather smug boast of mine. In that instant it struck me that I hadn't really changed in that respect, and there was something humbling in that awareness.

Returning from Scotland (much thinner of course), I found settling back into a terraced house in a city rather difficult. Fortunately my partner, anticipating this, had whilst I was away sold her house and planned our move to the Shropshire countryside. In the three months before we left York, the Temple undertook some final ceremonies (including burying our crystal), and I painted a new Tarot image, Mousa of Swords and noticed how - to me at least - my technical skill had suddenly improved. This image remains perhaps my favourite of the set.

We moved to a delightful old flat on a farm close to the village of Lydbury North, and wasted no time in performing Nine Angles rites at various relevant sites. The area in which we lived was reasonably remote, peaceful and for us resplendent with the

energies of the Tradition. One of our favourite haunts at that time, just for the sheer beauty of it, was Burrow Hill fort.

I began to paint local landscapes and exhibited a few in a few local galleries. As this aspect of my art developed, it seemed the Sinister Tarot was drawing to a close - it had served its purpose for me, and the last image I painted was the Magus of Pentacles. The originals, with the exception of the Magus of Chalices which was given to a close friend, are stored away in a vault in an East European city along with some very interesting other items, with instructions that this vault not be opened for another 70 years. The cards depict some significant sites such as the field called 'High Acre' where many a ceremony was conducted; Caer Din; the summit of Caer Caradoc; Loch Morar; Ratlinghope hills ...

A year after moving, I embarked on a career as an artist, and spent the next nearly ten years regularly exhibiting and selling my work. The aim was never to create pretty pictures of local scenes for tourists to buy, but rather presencings of the spirituality of the landscape, and to document all of the areas which were of general esoteric significance. All except one - a hill (or rather, a distinctive rocky outcrop) which is part of the Long Mynd (best reached via Ashes Hollow), and which, according to the Tradition, is the esoteric centre of the Western Aeon. It was interesting how I, my art, our relationship, all became entwined with the land, drawing nourishment from it.

During our time there we undertook ceremonies with a few individuals, but nothing really worked out for any length of time, so we became content just to work as the two of us. To be honest, we were not exactly the most approachable of people - we carried our sense of Destiny around openly with us, and must have seemed to some rather arrogant and stand- offish (more me than my partner). Such is often the way with those immersed in their grand artistic or occult schemes and aims.

XI

Just before we left for Shropshire, special circumstances in the world of my old insight role began calling me back: the National-Socialist Movement was created and I uneasily pledged my support to its leader and offered to help. My duties were mainly secretarial.

In essence, I was giving my loyalty to two things: the leader who was one of my of my closest friends and who had reluctantly agreed to head the organisation given that there was no one else to fill that role, and to the sinister itself, since it seemed here at last was an opportunity to create the chaos necessary as a foundation for the future

sinister aeon. Plus, again, it provided a challenge from which I might learn more about myself and others.

Once in Shropshire, I was interviewed by two French journalists about Reichsfolk - although they seemed far more interested in the ONA, and not knowing I was "CB" were enthralled to learn I knew Anton Long.

During those NSM days, myself and my partner would travel to stay with a fellow member who happened to be a millionaire playboy and also a one-time member of the Temple of Set. Much champagne was drunk. He had offered to buy a property in a rural area which could serve as an Aryan farming community. Naturally, Shropshire was the choice of location. So myself and my partner set out exploring options and had an enjoyable time visiting properties we never had a hope of affording ourselves (my favourites were a farm and a house in the Ale Oak, Clun Forest area). During that time we also attended meetings at the millionaire's house which members of Combat 18 and the Parachute Regiment would also attend.

I remember one relatively drunken night when the group had thinned down to a hardcore few, and we were discussing "Aryan revolution", etc. In answer to one question, I suddenly began speaking, unfalteringly, about the aims and strategies and spiritual dimensions, and this evolved into some type of inspired speech. Quite a few of my ideas deviated from the norm, and after everyone had listened seemingly captivated, the millionaire congratulated me and said what worried him was that he could easily end up listening to me instead of Adolf Hitler.

Regarding the proposed community, we managed to encourage a reasonable number of people to agree to move there and to strive to make it work, but in the end I closed the project down because the millionaire, as one of the conditions set if he purchased the property, wanted complete control over every aspect.

And then of course, there were the nail bombings. The first I or most everyone else I was aware of knew of this was via the newspapers or TV (and I had never heard of bomber's name until it was revealed on the news). It was clear the bomber was a lone individual who just happened to be inspired by some associated NSM writings (although his main inspiration seemed to come from the ‘Turner Diaries’, and aiding the success of the BNP), and was working to his own particular twisted agenda. This sparked off a series of police raids and I was phoned by a comrade and told to prepare for one myself. We hastily buried a few items in the landscape - including a floppy disc of names and addresses of subscribers to the newsletter. Nothing happened.

Prior to this, the NSM had already changed leadership (and it is interesting that Copeland is never spoken of in relation to the the new leader of the group), and I was having a hard time being loyal to this individual since he seemed to me to be undermining all that had previously been achieved, and replacing that with his own ideas. Eventually I resigned, and the group was subsequently closed down by the new leader in the aftermath of the bombings.

As an act of defiance, I re-activated Reichsfolk, promoting the religion of "Aryanism". This received almost zero support - quite a number of comrades were a little perplexed by any religious elements being attributed to NS itself, and support was not forthcoming since I wasn't really 'leader' material. I received a number of death threats from some outraged comrades in the US who just felt I would destroy any credibility NS had (as well as mis- representing it, as they saw it). I persisted putting out literature and writing impassioned letters for nine months until the whole exercise seemed futile.

And that, effectively, marked the end of my Insight Role. It was as if a possessing spirit had just suddenly left my body, and I remember sitting in a field of barley in the Summer sunlight, part marvelling at what I had put myself through during the previous few years, and feeling acutely that there was no truth in the chosen role, save what it had enabled me to personally achieve. A new Aeonic heretical force - Islam - then rose to the fore, of which I had an appreciation, but no desire to get actively involved with.

What was learned? I experienced the quintessence of the Insight Role: to be taken out of one's world and its boundaries and to thus confront and perchance defy one's own boundaries - and to discover new ones, and to thus evolve, incipit vitriol. My experiences were bounded by my own character, and I cannot relate any exciting tales about violence at meetings or spells in prison.

During those days, possessed by the excitement of the adventure, it was easy to blank out aspects of the world of my chosen role in order to progress. By 'aspects' I mean obviously the base 'racism' displayed by some of its adherents, as well as the veracity of historical revisionism. But as one's age and experiencing of the world and its peoples progress, to have had involvement in such a form for personal esoteric goals keeps leading, sometimes painfully, back to the essential question asked once elsewhere: is it worth the suffering of x amount of people in order to create one "Adept"?

XII

When my partner successfully undertook her Internal Adept rite in 2001, I found in her absence much time to reflect on my own journey thus far. Just before her leaving, I noticed how detached I was starting to feel during our rituals, and how the spark that ignited my love for and identification with the Tradition seemed less vital. Something was in the process of an uneasy transformation. I was in fact travelling towards the 'Light'.

I remained haunted by the monastic lifestyle I had glimpsed at Pluscarden, and often when I struggled emotionally during an Insight Role, my soul would seem to yearn for that reclusive, pure lifestyle imbued with the Sacred. From the Spring Equinox to the Summer Solstice, I conducted a fascinating correspondence with my guide which focused on various aspects of the Tradition from an alternative, broadly 'religious' perspective. This correspondence was collated and published by the Order under the title of 'An Interview with a Dweller of the Silent Desert'.

Allowing myself to give expression to my secret feelings made quite an impact upon me. The first night of our correspondence I walked around the hamlet where I lived, following the usual route my partner and I would often take. The night sky at that point seemed split in two: one side a thick blanket of turbulent cloud, the other the clear night of stars. I felt increasingly pressured as I followed our circuit, as if the sky was pressing down on me. My only thought at the time was "God is trying to kill me", and I felt a genuine terror which rushed me back to what seemed like the safety of the flat. As Summer drew on, the concept of 'God' began to make very real sense to me.

Gradually over the next few years, a personal form of mystical Christianity began to rather painfully evolve alongside what appeared to be my waning loyalty to the Sinister. Myself and my partner ceased our rituals as they no longer seemed to hold any meaning for me, and she and I began to pursue our own interests esoterically - a time which marked the slow, sad decline of our relationship.

This period saw the beginning of estrangement from the Order coinciding with new input from new members, and I remember walking along Offa's Dyke close to where we then lived, and feeling that the foundation for my life had been taken away from under me, leaving me utterly alone and without that sense of Destiny which had kept me going for so many years.

Music and painting began to increasingly fill the void, and I searched for my own symbols and meanings via which I could converse with the Cosmos. And so gradually a personal, numinous system began to quietly piece itself together with Christus the Redeemer at its centre. I began also to think in terms of 'penance' - that somehow I

needed to be spiritually purified, and that all my past endeavours had been essentially selfish. And so, in between my artistic pursuits, I took part-time work at a Nursing home, working nights on a locked EMI ward caring for the demented and the dying.

The suicide of a dear friend catalysed a further decision. At her funeral, her partner, also my best friend, knowing of my growing feelings regarding Christianity, gave me a rosary. And during the reading at the service, Revelations 21, I finally made the decision to convert to Catholicism.

A year before, I was in Glastonbury and had decided to attend a church service. I stood outside the Anglican church and watched the congregation going in for the service, grim- faced and solemnly and smartly dressed. I remembered my own upbringing - the utter tedium and greyness of the Church services; the complete lack of the numinous. So I chose the Catholic church instead. There I witnessed such life, such quiet joy and such certainty of belief. There was indeed magick in the Mass. For a year, I received instruction from a Priest with a view to converting. During our first meeting I told him something of my past, and I was taken aback by how non-judgemental he was. He remained that way - compassionate, patient, empathic. He never sought to convert me; rather, he gave his time to enable me to see which path I really wished to follow. Looking back, I think he always knew the way of Christianity was not for me.

Powered by my new religion, I would continue to walk the Shropshire hills but this time contemplating the Mysteries of Christ. However, the hills, the elements, the birds would keep singing to me of that which lay beyond, and would remind me by their presence of the Path I had been born to, from the first time I walked upon the Northumbrian hills right through all the experiences disguised in many forms which had led to that present point. Increasingly I knew, despite how much I wanted to believe otherwise, that Christ was not, for me, the central symbol. But there was no strident rejection of Christianity as a consequence; rather there was just an acceptance of the process in which that form played a part, and I was left with an understanding and appreciation of that form.

XIII

It struck me then that this immersion in 'the Light' was exactly the process described by the stage of post Internal Adept/pre-Abyss - that this stage involved a synthesising of opposites which could lead either towards and beyond the Abyss to thus deepen one's Sinister oath, or instead towards something else entirely - a deepening synthesis

perhaps, one which was possibly unique to the individual, unconnected to any current.

And for me, post Internal Adept ... A leaving of Shropshire after myself and my ex-partner came to the conclusion that we could no longer be together.

And then time spent in Hastings, followed by a most wyrdful move to Scotland; much travelling, much music - a time of seemingly growing away from the confines of my understanding of the Sinister Path, and evolving a natural 'Way' which expresses the totality which is me.

Looking back, and out of a respectful mindfulness for those caused suffering by some of the things I have aided, I hesitate to say I do not regret anything. However, one has to look inside one's heart at the time, and I know that whatever stage I was at, my main motivation was (and is still) the quest for self-knowledge and to presence the numinous.

As time progresses, life becomes simpler and focussed on what is personally important, and so there has been a gradual leaving of the outer trappings of the 'Sinister' and an arrival back to the shores of my music and painting. This has not been some tactic in order to attempt to achieve some sort of worldly artistic success: rather, it is a natural evolving towards my essential 'destiny', made possible by all my journeyings hitherto. Which is, after all, the point of any genuine esoteric way.

I have never made any grand claims about myself: my creations for the Order are consequences of my experiences - if some people value them, fine; if some do not, also fine. As has been written so many times before by the Order, everything can and should be surpassed. Nor do I present my experiences as some sort of benchmark for other Sinister aspirants. They certainly are not, as these recallings surely demonstrate. This is just simply one modest, personal tale, for those who may be curious.

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